

thus including the published work only up to the end of 1944, the extensive advances in knowledge of the louse achieved during the war years are fully recorded. Every one of the chapters dealing with the anatomy, biology, medical importance and control of lice has been enriched by new facts. The sensory physiology and behavior under controlled conditions are fully described. Data on the lethal effect of high temperature on eggs and on the distribution of lice in various seams and regions of clothing are extensive. The entomology of typhus and relapsing fever is presented in clear and concise form. *Rickettsia mooseri* is described as *Rickettsia muricola*. (In the new edition of Bergey's "Manual of Determinative Bacteriology" it is christened *Rickettsia typhi*!)

In the chapter on means of control of lice, the spectacular progress made in that field is reflected. The uses and methods of application of DDT and other insecticides are detailed. Evidence presented in Chapter 6 supports the view that the head louse and body louse are well-defined biological races. An appendix details the rearing and feeding of lice. At the conclusion of the book over 230 references are listed.

Although the revised edition is nearly half again as long as the first edition, the book remains unchanged in size and weight because of deterioration of the quality of the paper and binding.

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140 MILLION PATIENTS. By Carl Malmberg, Public Relations Advisor, Information Specialist for U.S.P.H.S. and Chief Investigator for U. S. Senate Subcommittee on Health and Education. (Pepper.)

Those who acclaim this book include: Allen M. Butler, John P. Peters, Ernst P. Boas, Channing Frothingham, Claude Pepper, Herman Kabat.

There is an old adage that says, "Birds of a feather—." The book itself seems dedicated to three major premises, unstated but developed in detail.

1. That present medical care in the U.S.A. is a failure.
2. That any voluntary approach to the problem would fail.
3. That Compulsory Health Insurance such as the Wagner-Murray-Dingell Bill sought is the only answer.

The first principle of logic, that any argument based on false premises still remains false in toto no matter how cleverly developed, seems to have been missed entirely by the author. The possibility that his major premises are false is nowhere admitted in the book, indeed such a thought apparently never entered his mind. In developing his first major premise he quotes statistics to show that U. S. is ninth in health. Australia, New Zealand, Uruguay, Canada, Iceland, Denmark, Norway, and Netherlands, he says, are better. He does not call attention to the facts that:

1. Australia, New Zealand, Uruguay and Canada are essentially pioneer countries with sturdy, strong stock with concentration of population factors and climate differing greatly from the U.S.A.
2. Iceland, Denmark and Norway are countries essentially with long cold climatic conditions curtailing diseases spread easily in warm countries with poor sewage disposal and sanitary facilities.

That Germany, Russia and England, with many of the factors common to the U.S.A., rank far below the U.S.A. in health even though they have had the advantages (?) of compulsory health insurance laws for years, is a fact that the author seems loath to bring out. Among other things in the steady stream of false interpretation of statistics is that of the findings of the U.S.A. Selective Service. The proper evaluation of these figures as analyzed by Goin, Bortz and many others have been ignored—perhaps because these men explode the myth and place the onus where it should rest.

Interestingly enough then the author goes on to show

that really the greatest cause of illness is poverty and that money is the only common denominator. Then slyly he admits that a change in the economic status of the people would be the direct and proper way to attack the problem and that if the people were on better financial footing the problem would be solved. But he decides that such a method is too great a problem and does not fit in with the plans of those who have other ideas and therefore we should attack the enemy through a side entrance apparently hoping to destroy illness by hampering the efforts of the medical profession and fighting anything except poverty. He quotes Falk, Klem, and Sinai. Again, "Birds of feather—." A pet "peeve" seems to be held against individual practitioners or family doctors. He intimates that group practice is the only efficient way to practice medicine—that your doctor wastes your time, your money, and your health. Is it that he fears the "milk of human kindness" that proverbially has flowed from the family doctor whose patients love him and ask his advice when political schemers attempt to "put over" a Wagner-Murray-Dingell Bill, or a Warren Bill?

Malmberg wails loudly against "A.M.A. tactics" apparently because these "tactics" have so far preserved for Americans some of their freedoms. Is it because these tactics do not "set well" with the bureaucratic domination theme?

The author depreciates all efforts along voluntary lines to answer the problem. He reverberates the old cliché and cry of "too little and too late" apparently ignoring that even when foolish leaders in their "hey day" sought to hide their own shortcomings and lack of vision, the great American people came through with "enough and in time."

He ends his book with the statement that the 140 million people can't be wrong. He draws the deduction therefore that Americans will embrace his schemes and live happily and healthily ever after. Even this premise could be false. An old ditty often quoted, said in part:

"He was right, dead right as he strode along,
But he's just as dead as if he were wrong."

The book, however, is fairly well written—appeals to those people who relish discord and demagogic attacks, and is an expertly drawn propaganda document. Therein lies its danger. It should be read by Doctors of Medicine if only to be able to answer the ridiculous fallacies that readers of the book will otherwise accept.

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PLAGUE. By Arthur N. Foxe. The Hobson Book Press, 1947. Price, \$2.50.

This volume of 122 pages, under the title of "Plague," deals with the life of René Théophile Hyacinthe Laënnec (1782-1826), the "inventor of the stethoscope and father of modern medicine." The old term for tuberculosis, "white plague," was abbreviated to the somewhat misleading term, "plague." In its present form the book represents the second edition of a very limited first issue of six copies which appeared in 1930. Aided by the review of a large mass of literature, poems, letters of the Laënnec correspondence and the carrier correspondence of the well-known author, Dr. Arthur N. Foxe, associate managing editor of the *Journal of Nervous and Mental Diseases*, has developed a very commendable biography of Laënnec. Short and pointed sentences depict his life and the familial relations in Brittany, his love for nature and his relentless studies and work in Paris under the shadow of the "tubercle," and economic difficulties. "Medicine and medicine and medicine—hour upon hour, upon hour." "The wards—flesh without destiny, not knowing in what world it would get its next sustenance. The autopsy—flesh with destiny." These few samples of the style should invite many to read this delightful book. Through his correspondence one is led to appreciate the nervous, restless, modest personality, endowed with generous, tolerant and refined feelings.